

March 8, 2022

To: Department Directors, Human Resources

From: John P. Curp, Interim City Manager



Subject: City of Cincinnati COVID-19 Policy Rollback

Purpose

Be advised that the employee personnel policies put into place by the City Administration in response to COVID-19 are rescinded. This includes the employee “test or vax” policy.

Upon review of updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), and in consultation with the Cincinnati Health Department (CHD), the City of Cincinnati will end the policies that had been implemented to out of concern for the safety of employees during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. The Administration will remain vigilant and continue to monitor community health indicators regarding COVID-19. If future conditions change, it will consider adopting new policies as necessary to follow the guidance of the CDC and the ODH.

Medical, clinical facilities or other City operations covered by federal mandates will continue to observe industry-standard safety requirements.

The process of the rollback includes, but is not limited to, the following policy areas:

Policy Rollbacks

Masking due to COVID-19

Effective Date: Immediately

The March 1, 2022 Update to Temporary Rule and Administrative Order for Masking is rescinded; masks or other facial coverings are no longer required of City employees under COVID-19 policies. Individuals are allowed to wear facial coverings at their discretion and departments may still require masks whenever industry safety standards or the nature of the work requires a facial covering.

Employee Testing for COVID-19

Effective Date: Immediately

COVID-19 testing under the City’s COVID-19 Vaccination Policy for City employees is discontinued.

Leave

Effective Date: Going forward, no more ACL or SKU time will be approved. Employees currently on ACL may continue on ACL until they return and retroactive ACL time adjustments, where needed, may be processed.

Leave policies in effect due to COVID-19 are discontinued, including the use of the ACL and SKU pay codes. Union contracts with requirements for physician verifications should be adhered to. Non-represented employees covered under HRP&P 4.6.7 may submit a positive, contemporaneous COVID-19 test as sufficient verification for the purposes of that policy, only.

Employees who are positive for COVID-19 should not report to work. If already at work, the employee should be sent away from the workplace and be placed on sick leave pursuant to the applicable terms conditions of the appropriate union contract. Employees who are exposed to COVID-19 should follow CDC guidance in reference to quarantine based on vaccination status.¹ Sick Leave may be used to cover the duration of time identified by CDC guidelines following an employee's positive test,² or longer if needed pursuant to recommendation by the employee's physician.

Questions about contact tracing should generally be directed to the entity issuing a result. Additional questions can be directed to CHD: 513.357.7462 or COVID.CHD@cincinnati-oh.gov.

Donated Time

Effective Date: Immediately

The temporary expansion of the donated time program is discontinued. Union contracts and HRP&P 4.3 should be adhered to as applicable.

Remote Work

Effective Date: Immediately. Employees currently working remotely due to administrative approval are to be recalled to full-time, on-site work by the end of the current pay period, where they can perform the essential functions of their jobs. No further approvals for 30-day remote work accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act as a reasonable accommodation will be granted after the end of this pay period. Employees currently working remotely are encouraged to revisit the interactive process to determine if a new or previous accommodation is effective.

Administrative requests for remote work are discontinued. Only remote work as allowed under HRP&P 6.8.4 may be requested or approved. Employees working remotely under the Americans with Disabilities Act should be provided notice that the policy for remote work is ended, and that accordingly no further 30-day extensions will be approved after March 12, 2022. Such employees are encouraged to contact their HRL to discuss returning to the interactive process and revisiting previous or other possible accommodations.

Contact Tracing

Effective Date: Immediately

Employees should comply with quarantine and isolation orders and guidance from CHD and the CDC. The City will report positive cases to the Cincinnati Health Department through Redcap when an employee calls in sick with COVID-19. Employees and departments should comply with existing union contracts and applicable policies for reporting illnesses and attendance.

¹ [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html), available at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html

² 1. Type of test (i.e., PCR or antigen); 2. Entity issuing the result (e.g., laboratory, healthcare entity, telehealth, etc.); 3. Specimen collection date. A negative test result must show the specimen was collected within the 72 hours prior to submission; 4. Information that identifies the employee; 5. Test result

Social Distancing**Effective Date:** Immediately

Employees and departments may hold gatherings, including meetings and trainings, in person with more than ten people present. Group meetings may be limited to a maximum capacity by Fire Code or other applicable law, but are otherwise returned to pre-COVID limitations.

Virtual meetings, when effective, are encouraged but not mandated. They can be implemented or required for efficiency at the discretion of the department.

Departments that are closed to the public should plan for reopening.

Symptom Assessments**Effective Date:** Immediately

Temperature checks at City facilities are optional where available, but not mandatory for entry.

Supervisors should no longer assess whether employees are openly displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

Dress Code**Effective Date:** Immediately

Departmental dress codes should revert to pre-COVID-19 departmental standards and policies, if they have not already done so.

Travel**Effective Date:** Immediately

Employees may travel in accordance with all contractual requirements, such as mileage payments, administrative regulations, and departmental policies and procedures.

Extension of Probation**Effective Date:** Immediately

Standard Civil Service Rules and union contracts shall apply to probationary periods for applicable employees.

Authority and Compliance

This policy directive from the City is being issued under the authority of the City Manager and authorizes all appropriate administrative actions for departments to rescind policies that were enacted pursuant to the City of Cincinnati's response to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, which may include the issuance of safe and legal orders to employees. Failure to adhere to safe and legal orders may result in corrective action.